

FIRST AUTOMOBILE PARKWAY

ELEVEN MILES WILL BE READY FOR VANDERBILT CUP RACES.

No Road in the World Like That Being Built on Long Island—Planned Ultimately to Be 100 Miles Long—Not for Racing Only—First Section Concrete.

Ever since automobilism came into vogue in this country Americans have dreamed of the time when they would have a road upon which they might speed their cars at will, free from the dangers of grade railroad crossings, from careless drivers of horses and more especially from zealous country constables lying in wait with tin stop watches along measured stretches to nab any luckless motorist who might exceed the speed limit. This dream is fast becoming a reality, for construction work upon America's first exclusive automobile highway, the Long Island Motor Parkway, is now under way in Nassau county.

It is expected that about eleven miles of cement roadway will be completed in time to allow several weeks of practice by the drivers of racing cars that will compete in the elimination trial on October 10 to select the American team for the Vanderbilt cup race on October 24. The elimination trial and the cup race are not to be run entirely on the parkway, but will be decided over a circuit of about twenty-five miles made up of the completed section of the parkway and parts of public highways of Nassau county.

Not only will the Long Island Motor Parkway be the first exclusive road for automobiles ever built in this country but it is also the first undertaking of the kind in the world. The Brooklands automobile racing course in England cannot be compared to it, as it is a circular track, built, maintained and used solely and entirely as a racetrack. On the contrary, the Long Island Motor Parkway is destined to be an automobile highway, occasionally given over to racing, rather than a course devoted solely to speed events.

The idea of a special road or highway where automobiles could be driven at speed was first publicly broached at a dinner given on November 9, 1905, to Robert Lee Morrell of the Automobile Club of America, who as chairman of the Vanderbilt cup commission had carried the second Vanderbilt cup race and the American elimination trial to a successful conclusion. Windsor T. White, head of the Vanderbilt White Star line, then president of the National Association of Automobile Manufacturers and one of the speakers at the dinner, made the suggestion that such a road be built during a speech in which he narrated some of the difficulties attending the construction of a road racing car in this country.

He knew whereof he spoke, for his firm had entered a steam racer in the Vanderbilt cup race that year. He told of the trouble his firm had had in trying out the car in the vicinity of the factory at Cleveland before it was taken to Long Island for the preliminary practice over the circuit on which the elimination trial and the Vanderbilt cup race took place. Employees of his concern had searched the State of Ohio for a stretch of road good enough to run a racing car over at speed. While there were a few stretches of road there were not one five miles long anywhere near Cleveland where the racer could be tried out without interference from police officers or country constables.

He expressed the conviction that the automobile manufacturers of the United States would never succeed in producing a car capable of winning a great international road race until they had a road of their own upon which racing cars could be driven at will without danger of arrest.

The suggestion made by Mr. White was enthusiastically received by those present, among whom were Winthrop E. Scarratt, a former president of the Automobile Club of America; S. T. Davis, Jr., and A. L. Ritzer, entrant and designer respectively of the Locomobile racer; Robert Graves, entrant of the Mercedes; George M. MacWilliam, entrant of the Darracq; and several other racing men. E. R. B. Holland of the firm that entered the Fiat racers; Andre Massenet, entrant of the Panhard; E. R. Schwarzkopf, who acted as testmaster; Alfred Reeves and Peter Gogarty. It was agreed that the idea was excellent, but the expense of construction was too great.

The Long Island Motor Parkway, Inc., will afford manufacturers, agents and others the opportunity to see the great need of trying out their products under true road conditions where there exist no speed regulations. Buyers of cars at the present time find it difficult to test cars as to know that their requirements have been complied with. This particular feature so appeals to engineers and designers of racing and touring cars as to call forth unanimous expressions of approval and support.

Long Island, convenient as it is to New York city, is daily becoming more and more a place of year-round residence by owners of motor cars. The scenery through which the Motor Parkway is to pass comprises level stretches, numerous hills, views of the Sound and ocean, passing lakes and many large estates. The Long Island Motor Parkway is a necessity. The use of the much frequented highways of the island by motorists has become a headache and expensive.

All railroads and highways will be crossed above or below grade. These highways, crossing the island from north to south, will in time undoubtedly be improved and act as valuable feeders to the parkway, making it convenient for those who desire to ride to and from New York. Coincidentally with the completion of the Blackwell's Island Bridge the city of New York is planning vast improvements to the boulevard system of Queens borough. Liberal speed ordinances are contemplated which will make high speed between Manhattan and points along the Motor Parkway permissible.

Owners of Long Island real estate are appreciating the fact that their land values will be greatly increased, and are freely offering rights of way through their properties. The numerous golf, fishing, yachting and shooting clubs will be conveniently and speedily reached and can be more fully made use of by their members. The local authorities of the towns and villages through which the Motor Parkway will pass are cooperating to make possible its early completion. It is believed that as soon as the rights of way have been acquired the work of construction can be completed within six months, which will make it possible to open the parkway in the fall of 1909.

The Parkway directors would be disappointed in their hope of being able to open the Parkway last fall, as the matter of securing a continuous right of way proved to be much more difficult than had been expected. While miles and miles of right of way was freely offered without cost to the Parkway, there were a number of connecting links that suddenly assumed a previously undreamed of value in the eyes of the owners. Then the financial disturbance in this city made it difficult to get hold of ready money.

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SECTION OF THE MOTOR PARKWAY.

ing the roadway made the task of accomplishing anything seem too difficult. The Vanderbilt cup race in the idea of a road, 1901, did much to make the idea a reality. The number of spectators who witnessed that race was variously estimated at from 200,000 to 500,000, and in spite of wire fences, deputy sheriffs and thousands of guards it was impossible to keep the spectators out of the course.

One headless spectator was killed on the course near Krug's Corner. Joe Tracy, one of America's best known racing drivers, halted his Locomobile racer in front of the official stand on one of the early rounds of the race and declared he would withdraw from the contest unless the spectators were kept off the course. After this race Mr. Vanderbilt declared he would never again consent to a race for his cup unless the contest was held on a private road or over a circuit guarded by troops.

The first meeting of those who were to become directors of the Long Island Motor Parkway was held at the Lawyers Club in this city on October 11, 1906. Those who were at this meeting and others held soon after included W. R. Vanderbilt, Jr., David Hennen Morris, August Belmont, W. G. McAdoo, Colgate Hoyt, L. C. Weir, Commodore Frederick G. Bourne, H. K. Burras, Harry Payne Whitney, Clarence H. Mackay, Anton G. Hopendyl, Ralph Peters, John Fenton, Jefferson De Mont Thompson, Col. John Jacob Astor, Dean Alvord, Mortimer L. Schiff and A. R. Partridge.

They decided to organize the Long Island Motor Parkway, Inc., and they became members of the board of directors. The following additional members: B. F. Yorkum, H. B. Hollins, J. Adolph Mollenhauer, E. Rand Hollander and August Heckscher, all of this city; S. T. Davis, Jr., Bridgeport; Henry Ford, Detroit; and Edwin Ross Thomas, Buffalo. John Fenton and Dave Hennen Morris have since resigned owing to press of other business. Roy A. Rainey was elected to succeed Mr. Fenton. No successor to Mr. Morris has yet been elected.

W. R. Vanderbilt, Jr., was elected president. Harry Payne Whitney first vice-president. A. R. Partridge second vice-president and general manager and Jefferson De Mont Thompson treasurer. The capital was fixed at \$2,500,000, made up of \$500,000 in twenty-five year gold bonds of \$500 each, bearing interest at 4 per cent, and secured by a mortgage of \$1,000,000 in preferred stock of \$100 shares, bearing interest at 5 per cent, non-cumulative, and \$1,000,000 in common stock. A prospectus was issued which looked in part as follows:

The Long Island Motor Parkway, Inc., is to be organized and incorporated for the purpose of acquiring on Long Island a right of way approximately 100 feet wide and 50 miles long. Beginning at a point near the city line of Greater New York the parkway will have its eastern terminus near the shore of Peconic Bay, Suffolk county. On this right of way there will be constructed an automobile parkway, properly fenced to protect users. It is intended to charge for the use of this parkway and establish reasonable regulations as to its use.

The revenues from this and other sources are conservatively estimated to more than pay the fixed charges known and estimated. The sources of revenue are as follows:

A—Charges on an annual, semi-annual, quarterly, monthly, weekly, daily and hourly basis.

B—Admissions, sale of seats, parking spaces, etc., in connection with events staged on the race for the William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., cup.

C—Testing of cars by manufacturers. D—Night races, economy tests, non-stop runs, twenty-four hour contests, etc.

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All railroads and highways will be crossed above or below grade. These highways, crossing the island from north to south, will in time undoubtedly be improved and act as valuable feeders to the parkway, making it convenient for those who desire to ride to and from New York. Coincidentally with the completion of the Blackwell's Island Bridge the city of New York is planning vast improvements to the boulevard system of Queens borough. Liberal speed ordinances are contemplated which will make high speed between Manhattan and points along the Motor Parkway permissible.

Owners of Long Island real estate are appreciating the fact that their land values will be greatly increased, and are freely offering rights of way through their properties. The numerous golf, fishing, yachting and shooting clubs will be conveniently and speedily reached and can be more fully made use of by their members. The local authorities of the towns and villages through which the Motor Parkway will pass are cooperating to make possible its early completion. It is believed that as soon as the rights of way have been acquired the work of construction can be completed within six months, which will make it possible to open the parkway in the fall of 1909.

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general manager of the Long Island Motor Parkway, gives the following details of the construction work on the Parkway:

"Many of the plans which we early formulated have been executed to the letter. Our right of way has been secured for 100 feet wide. Of the sixty miles, the length which we contemplate, we have already secured something over fifty miles. The gap between the two sections of the road will be closed within the very near future."

"As we first planned, every highway and railroad crossing is to be taken either above or below grade. The hills in the road surface we decided upon and constructed at the present time we are constructing about twenty-six of these crossings. We have under contract and are now constructing about eleven miles of highway of a specialized type. Our bridges are constructed with reinforced concrete abutments and steel spans of nearly standard type and construction as possible."

"Variations, of course, are demanded as the topography of the country indicates. After numerous tests of various types of road surface we decided upon and constructed with the Haasem Paving Company for a stretch about eleven miles long. So confident was this company of the ability to meet our demands that they obligated themselves to complete this eleven miles within a specified period of time, and furthermore bonded themselves against maintenance on our part for a term of five years from the date of completion and turning over of the highway to the Parkway Company for use."

"For the benefit of those who may not be familiar with this construction, and while avoiding a technical description, I would simply state that this road surface is a ground concrete, using reinforcement of wire of a given mesh. The subgrade, drainage, grading, cuts and fills are all prepared by the Parkway Company and turned over to the paving company ready for the application of their process."

"Some of a given dimension, approximately two inches, is laid to the depth of two and one-half inches, wetted down and rolled. On top of this is laid the reinforcement of steel wire, a second layer of stone or gravel is laid on top of the wire, wetted down and rolled to a perfectly smooth finish."

"Following this work the concrete is put on in form-work, in concrete and rolled in; a sufficient number of applications of cement in this form is made until the entire mass is securely bound and all inlets are filled by the grouting. Rolling is continued during the entire time of grouting."

"In order that the finish might not be too rough or tiresome to the eyes a pigment of lamp black is used, varying as the conditions of scenery demand, so that in sections through the woods the road surface is lighter than on the open plains or in the open country, making the road readily distinguishable at all times of the day and night."

The work of construction on this roadbed was authorized by our construction

committee on May 11. On May 14 the Parkway Company began the work of clearing, grading and sub-surfacing. During the last week in June the paving company commenced to receive deliveries of broken stone from the Clinton Point stone quarries on the Hudson River, and at once began the work of construction, carrying the same to a point near each one of the bridges, which are also under construction by the Parkway Company. Immediately upon the completion of the bridges and the paving and rolling of the hills the road surface will be continued on to and over each one of these bridges or crossings."

"Eleven miles of this highway will be completed in time for the fourth race for the William K. Vanderbilt, Jr., cup, on October 10 of this year, this date having been set by the commission in charge of the race for the elimination and selection of the American car to compete against the foreign cars which have been and are being entered. Provision has already been made for extending this highway at least sixteen miles during the spring and summer of 1909. In fact, the work of clearing, grading, filling, etc., will be prosecuted during the fall and winter of 1908 and the spring of 1909, so that by May of next year the road surface, of whatever type may be determined, can be placed."

"In addition to the Haasem paving we are studying with great care the use of petroleum compound in connection with local material—Peekskill gravel, Georgia gravel, etc. These are especially interesting in and are giving all possible consideration to the type of road construction which prevails in California, where oil is used to great advantage, and which has previously been ploughed and later tamped by special forms of tamping rollers, which packs the mass from the bottom up. This type of construction has many attractions for us, and as soon as we are assured of the fact that it will withstand the rigors of the Northern climate we will adopt it in our highway."

"To-day we find the automobile owned not only by the man who resides in the city and uses it for pleasure but also in the hands of the farmer, the small shopkeeper, the doctor, the traveling salesman, the clergyman and the undertaker, the result being that the general public is becoming educated to its use, and in fact learning to operate, care for and successfully handle this type of locomotion."

"The construction of the Long Island Motor Parkway has not been a work of simplicity and without complications. It is a revolutionary and unusual as was the construction of the first steam railroad, the first telegraph and the first trolley car line or the first telephone line. We believe that the Long Island Motor Parkway will be the first of its length, reaching to the limits of the city of New York, is but the forerunner of other types of specialized highways, which will radiate from all the centers of population in this country."

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HELD UP BY A POSTMASTER

DOWN SOUTH HUMOR AS A YANKEE DRUMMER FOUND IT.

Wanted a Letter and Wanted It Badly, but He Had to Wait Until the Rural Humorist Had Worn Himself Out and Read All the Newspapers and Postcards.

"Met up with a country postmaster the other day who—well, no, I won't say that I hankered to mix powdered glass in his hard cider. I won't say that because I've got to go back to that neighborhood again sooner or later, and I feel as if I've been spotted by enough country postmasters already," said a travelling salesman whose tour of all the country postmasters had covered that county in about five days, driving around from one general store to another in a buckboard that I hired in the county seat town. On the day before I finished the county I got a wire from my firm stating that a check covering my expense account had been mailed to me at the Punkville post office. Why the pin-heads in charge of drummers' expense accounts for my firm had sent the check to Punkville instead of to the county seat town, only four miles away, I don't know, except that I'd dated an order from Punkville, which probably caused 'em to suppose that I had anchored in Punkville and made it my county headquarters.

"So I had to drive out from the county seat town to Punkville on the morning of the day I was due to get the check. I was to take the 12:30 train out of the county seat town. I pulled into Punkville in my buckboard at 11:15. I'd been told that the mail was due there about that time, and I didn't have much margin to get my check and make the four mile return drive to catch the 12:30 train. So I was in a heap of a hurry and probably looked it. But it's a mistake looking like you're in a hurry almost anywhere in the country, but particularly in the country district south of Mason and Dixon's line, where this happened. If there's any one thing they take particular delight in doing there it's sidetracking bustling Yankees—especially drummers—who act as if they're in a rush to get to the post office to get their money. The store in which the post office is located and the generally deserted blacksmith shop across the road therefrom. It's one of those post offices, not yet rigged with rural delivery, to which the farmers drive in to get their mail—seed catalogues and the prize giving weeklies published in Maine—every once in a while when they happen to think of it, and are not havin' or choppin' fodder or harrowin' the forty or smokin' hog meat or duffin' suttin' else. The store in front and trudged into the store humbly enough. It was one of those stores that smell of salt mackerel, mildewed prunes, weary codfish and holdover cheese and with coal scuttles and gloves and sun bonnets and halters and such like all strung together overhead on wires or ridge ropes. Five or six one gallon wool hatters sat around on boxes and barrels. Two or three of them had staked themselves to good cigars two for a nickel upon getting in and waiting to the rest."

"I noticed 'em winking at each other when I stepped in. I looked like a howling duff in that place, you see, because I was a pair of russet shoes and such like all strung together overhead on wires or ridge ropes. Five or six one gallon wool hatters sat around on boxes and barrels. Two or three of them had staked themselves to good cigars two for a nickel upon getting in and waiting to the rest."

"The postmaster was doing up a quarter of a pound of tea when I arrived. He was about 60 and he had whiskers in his ears and a wart on either side of his nose. 'M